



Winter 2004

Leading Change



Ensuring That Every Child Has

Equal Opportunity to Learn & Succeed

**Message from the
Office of the
Governor**

**Certification for
School Principals?**

**What Is Adequate
Yearly Progress
(AYP)?**

**Schoolwide
Behavior and
Learning Initiative**

**Follow the
Leader!**

**Principals Play a
Critical Role In
Promoting Early
Childhood Literacy**

Parents as Partners

Glossary

You Can't Raise Achievement Until the Barriers That Poverty Creates Are Eliminated

One Principal's Solution

by Marilee Bylsma, Executive Director,
Leadership Academy, Detroit Public Schools

The role of the principal is as diverse as the community s/he serves. The ultimate goal for all schools is improved student achievement, but the methods for achieving this goal vary in each community. Principals who serve children living in high-poverty neighborhoods have the unique responsibility of developing learning communities capable of meeting the specific needs that arise when a large number of the children attending school live in difficult situations brought on by poverty.

You cannot increase student achievement in these areas until you address the barriers created by poverty. Principals in high-poverty neighborhoods must lead staff to go beyond traditional job expectations. School staff in high-poverty areas should develop deep commitment to meeting the challenges of ALL students and making decisions in their best interests.

Breaking Down Barriers

Poverty creates some unique obstacles to learning. The most challenging of these is when

students come to school with a limited base of prior knowledge. For example, fifth graders in one Detroit school were confused by a test question involving adding the prices of various items on a menu. Eighty-six percent of the group had never ordered food from a menu in a restaurant. Students in high poverty urban areas also may fail to comprehend what they read about fishing, going camping in the summer, or attending a concert or play. Student comprehension is limited because the students do not have an experience base to relate to what they are reading. Unmet physical needs present another huge common obstacle to learning in high-poverty neighborhoods. If a student is hungry, cold, or tired, s/he has difficulty concentrating. A hungry student doesn't care about doing division. To overcome these obstacles to student achievement, principals can work with the community to secure donations for proper clothing and food for students and to find ways to provide students with broad experiences for increased comprehension. As the word spreads throughout the community, people tend to help children in need.

Building Teams

Principals must believe that no single individual is as smart as the whole school team. This is especially true in areas where poverty is prevalent. By recognizing the talents, resources, and contributions of others, principals set a tone for collaboration and successful decision-making. Exemplary leaders bring out the best in each member of the staff and use their talents to enrich the school community and student potential. A mission statement that speaks to the importance of shared responsibility for student achievement by all staff, parents, community partners, and administrators is a good step toward team building.

Teachers can no longer teach in isolation and principals cannot sit in an office making decisions while talking about being collaborative. Principals have multiple responsibilities, including:

- Modeling the qualities they want their staffs to embrace.
- Facilitating the educational process by providing all members of the team with the tools they need to do their job while setting high expectations for job performance.
- Observing what motivates others and empowering team members to see the team building vision.

Data Provides a Road Map

The principal collects data for the staff that will construct a picture of the school. Student test scores for each teacher and each grade level over a period of years (factoring in poverty level, student mobility, teacher mobility, and the average years of teaching experience) can paint a picture that identifies patterns, needs to be addressed, and areas to be remediated. For example, data may indicate that when the mobility (changing schools) and poverty levels increase, test scores decrease. With this knowledge, the school may decide to institute a specific program for children who are highly mobile.

Curriculum Matters

To raise student achievement in any school, teachers must teach what the students need to learn at each grade level based on district and state standards and assessments. The principal of a high-poverty school must monitor the achievement of individual students, work with the teacher to identify interventions for students as needed, and monitor classroom instruction. A student-centered curriculum that meets the needs of individuals encourages high levels of achievement. The curriculum should be rich in hands-on experience inside and outside of the classroom.

Equipping Others and Expecting Results

Staff in high-poverty schools must collectively identify the barriers that poverty creates for their students. Then, each staff member must commit to each student's learning and achievement and believe that failure is not an option. As the school leader, the principal must not confuse leadership with power and authority. The school leader must enable everyone to catch the vision and work together to achieve the goals of the learning community, holding each staff member accountable for her/his unique role in helping ALL students learn.

Marilee Bylsma is the Executive Director of the Leadership Academy for Detroit Public Schools. The Leadership Academy provides professional development for principals, assistant principals, and those aspiring for these positions. Marilee is the former principal of Detroit's Samuel Gompers Elementary School where 98 percent of the population is at poverty level. Samuel Gompers Elementary is a National Blue Ribbon School, a Golden Apple for High Achievement School, and a National Title One Distinguished School.

For more information, contact: Marilee Bylsma at (313) 494-7727 or e-mail Marilee.bylsma@detroitk12.org.

For a list of recommended books and additional resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Meet Michigan's Teacher of the Year

The Importance of Quality Leadership

by William R. Cecil,
Michigan Teacher of the Year, 2003-2004



In my career as a teacher, I have worked with four different principals. Each time the school principal changed, the school climate changed. A

great leader can have a positive effect on school climate, staff morale, and especially student performance. The opposite is true for a poor leader. If you think about it, principals are as important to running a school as pilots are to flying planes. Passengers could have a well-built airplane, a wonderful crew, and still be in danger if the pilot doesn't have the knowledge to do all the things necessary to fly the plane. The same is true of a school.

Flying a plane is a huge responsibility. An airplane pilot takes people from where they are and safely transports them to where they want to go. Pilots are highly skilled, confident, poised, and able to problem-solve quickly and successfully. Good principals, too, must be skilled in many different areas and safely lead teachers, staff, and students within their school to where they need to be.

A principal's leadership sets the tone

continued on page 9

HOW TO:

Take the Mystery Out of School Report Cards

PAGE 4





From the Office of the Governor

by Jennifer M. Granholm,
Governor of Michigan

As your Governor, I have committed myself to being a partner in the effort to turn high priority schools into high achieving schools. Michigan has set high standards for school leaders to make sure that ALL students achieve academic success. School principals are the leaders of learning. At the building level, the job of school principal calls for leadership invested in excellence, and it's not an easy job.

When you have a struggling school, you often have a struggling community. That's why I am calling on others in government, business, labor, and the faith-based community to support the efforts of principals. Working together, I believe we can help ALL of Michigan's youngest citizens reach their full potential—as students and as productive members of our society. The Children's Action Network (CAN) is my effort to convene a network of state agencies to work collaboratively to better support and provide services for Michigan's children. CAN brings together all state agencies that touch the lives of Michigan's children in some way. CAN works across state department boundaries to uplift all children. Organizations coming together through CAN include the Michigan Department of Education, Family Independence Agency, Departments of Corrections and Community Health among others. As a part of this effort, the Family Independence Agency has established Family Resource Centers, which are currently located on site in 20 of Michigan's high priority schools.

Last May, principals from Michigan's high priority schools participated in the Michigan Department of Education's Adequate Yearly

Progress (AYP) Principals' Academy. Their participation was an important step toward making sure that our children are educated to attain high academic standards. Having seen scores of successful "turn-around" efforts in Michigan schools, I know there is no substitute for strong committed leadership in this process.

Over the summer, high priority teams were formed in eight regional service delivery areas around the state. These high priority teams will continue to meet throughout the school year to provide information on their progress to assist Michigan's high priority schools.

In February 2003, I launched Project Great Start, a new initiative recognizing that education begins at birth, not when a child enters school. This initiative seeks to coordinate existing early childhood initiatives and programs to achieve common objectives and measurable outcomes for Michigan's youngest children. Visit www.greatstartforkids.org to learn more about this important initiative.

I want Michigan to be the state that leads the nation in education. I believe that if we all pull together as partners, that goal can be within our grasp. While being a principal is a challenging and, all too often, thankless job, I join the many in Michigan who are thankful to our principals for accepting this challenge with such determination.

"It might be a little extreme to say we found a way to put the "pal" back in principal, but hopefully, with the task force report's recommendations in place, we will see a day in the near future when principals aren't so isolated by the overwhelming nature of the job."

Marianne Yared McGuire,
Elevating Educational
Leadership Task Force Chair



From the Board

The Changing Role of School Leaders

Michigan Leaders Address the Issue of Principal Certification

by Marianne Yared McGuire, Chair, Elevating Educational Leadership Task Force,
Michigan State Board of Education

In August 2002, the State Board of Education's Task Force on Elevating Educational Leadership presented findings of its year-long study on school administrators. The report concluded that the role of principal has dramatically changed over the past decade. The position of principal has taken on multiple layers of duties with expertise required in the following areas:

- Curriculum
- Grant writing and fundraising
- Law
- Marketing and public relations
- Diplomacy with parents and the community
- Security and safety
- Special education
- Education administrator
- Building manager

Consequently, the Task Force concluded that academic needs of individuals seeking to be a principal are downplayed while managerial aspects are accented. The Task Force report found that fewer educators aspire to the position of school principal, those who do apply focus more on their managerial capabilities than on their academic backgrounds.

The Task Force concluded that a continuing focus on the role of principal as manager is not beneficial to improving the educational performance of students. When a principal is hired based on managerial qualifications, s/he may not have the background necessary to offer needed guidance on student behavior, curriculum development, or other instructionally relevant

issues. The Task Force recommends that schools need principals who are familiar with a variety of data sources and know how to analyze the results and apply them toward elevating student achievement.

As policy makers, the State Board has an obligation to assure children, parents, and communities that their schools are staffed with leaders qualified to help teachers teach what students are required to learn and that principals complete a scholarly, research-based preparation and certification process. We need to affirm that every school has a leader who is educated to offer the best opportunities possible for the teachers and students in that building.

For more information, contact: Marianne Yared McGuire, (313) 882-5289, mcguiremar@earthlink.net or State Board of Education, 608 West Allegan St., P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 373-3324, www.michigan.gov/mde.

▶ To read the complete State Board of Education Task Force report on Elevating Educational Leadership or to read more about Michigan's law regarding principal certification, visit www.cenmi.org or www.michigan.gov/mde and click on the *Leading Change* icon.



From the Superintendent's Office

by Tom Watkins,
Michigan Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Welcome to another issue of *Leading Change*! With this issue, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) highlights the State Board of Education Task Force Initiative for Elevating Educational Leadership. Myriad challenges limit the time school principals have to cruise hallways; observe classes at random; or chat leisurely with students, teachers, and parents. Today's principal must be a curriculum expert, consensus builder, economist, technology whiz, safety engineer, special education expert, grant writer, media liaison, and an advisor in everything from instructional design and delivery to state standards and federal regulations. The school principal is the key to successful school improvement. Principals must look ahead, think strategically, plan creatively, assess carefully, and act boldly on the best information that is available. Principals must *Lead Change*, not just react to it.

Michigan's Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) scores are in, and we are encouraged by the trends revealed; but we are still cautious, knowing that there are greater targets toward which we need to strive. Those targets are the standards set by the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act. Governor Granholm has joined parents and educators in our efforts to achieve the goals of NCLB for students. The Governor is calling upon government agencies, businesses, the faith-based community, and other community groups to help schools in need of improvement make significant progress in student achievement through the High Priority School Initiative. You

can read more about this MDE sponsored initiative in this issue of *Leading Change* (see "Strong Committed Leadership Can Turn Schools Around," page 12). The leadership skills of principals are at the heart of this partnership for success.

Given the crucial role that principals play in the life of a school and the success of its students, we must find a way to identify the skills and attributes of good school leaders. At the same time, we must determine what those leaders can do to close the achievement gap among Michigan students. The State Board supports the reinstatement of principal certification in Michigan and has directed MDE staff to begin preparing standards for consideration. Districts are invited to voice their perspectives about what instructional leaders need to know and be able to do to lead our schools. What are the current issues and demands that principals face both now and in the future? What knowledge and skills do they need in order to respond in ways that benefit Michigan's students? What standards are districts currently using to prepare principals? We welcome your input and support your efforts!

Use this issue of *Leading Change* to open a dialogue about educational leadership within your learning community. Copy and share the articles, read the supplemental Web-linked articles and resources, distribute copies, and create conversations that will lead to improved school leadership and student achievement.

It's my hope that you will find this publication to be a valuable resource about the many efforts taking place around our state to ensure the best possible education for ALL students in Michigan.

Share Your Thoughts

The State Board of Education seeks ideas from administrators about how the Michigan Department of Education can alleviate *Education YES!* and *Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)* score reporting demands on local districts. To make suggestions, visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on the "Share Your Thoughts" button.



LeadingChange

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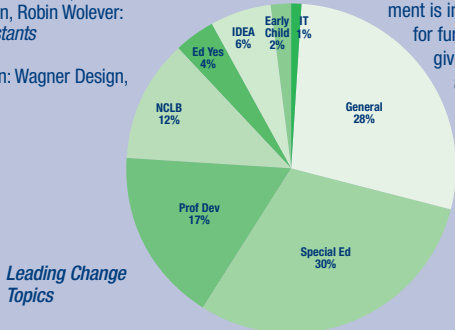
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To access Leading Change online, go to www.michigan.gov/mde and click on the Leading Change icon or visit the Center for Educational Networking (CEN) Web site at www.cenmi.org for .pdf and html formats that include Web-linked resources. The summer 2003 online issue of Leading Change is still available. This valuable resource is focused on Ensuring Excellent Educators and offers current ideas, practices, and plans for ensuring that adults who surround Michigan students are well equipped to support student learning. You can subscribe to e-Leading Change at www.cenmi.org, and you will be notified when the publication is posted online.

Certification Standards for School Principals? Definitely!



Certification Will Lead to Improved Student Achievement

by Helene J. Lusa, Ed.D,
Principal, Tyler Elementary
School, Livonia Michigan

The stylist who cuts and colors hair has one, along with the mechanic who repairs automobiles. The family physician and the classroom teacher both have one. Even the gasoline that Michigan drivers pump into their cars has one proudly posted on the pump. All of these occupations and commodities require certification or licensing from the State of Michigan guaranteeing that they meet certain standards for skill, performance, or quality set by the government. Noticeably absent from this list is the school building principal, the person charged with the tremendous responsibility of enhancing student achievement in Michigan schools. Given the demands for improving student learning, the accountability tied to those demands, and the diverse skills needed to lead a school each day, it's time for Michigan to reinstate a process for certifying or licensing school principals.

The legislature rescinded certification requirements for school administrators in 1995. The last valid administrative license expired in 2001. The elimination of certification requirements was intended to

open the door for leaders from other professions to come in and improve student achievement. However, leaders from the business world and other professions did not rush to apply for principalships. Currently, building principals are only required to complete six educational credit hours or 18 State Board Continuing Education Units (CEUs) over a five-year period before and while serving as a principal.

Some might argue that there will be—if there isn't already—a shortage of qualified principals, and requiring certification will only make that worse. Certification can be voluntary—giving school districts a choice between a candidate who is certified and one who is not. To ease existing or potential shortages,



non-traditional routes to certification could be made available for those candidates from another profession who choose school administration. A state-adopted process for certification would ensure that potential principals meet specific standards and give school districts some confidence in their skills.

Currently, school districts can choose between a candidate who is certified and one who is not; however, since Michigan does not currently offer certification, the only certified candidates for a position come from outside the state. Principal certification

will only be reinstated with legislative approval. Hand in hand with legislative approval is State Board of Education approval of standards for institutions of higher education principal preparation programs. In August 2003, the Board directed the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Professional Preparation Services staff to develop these standards and a legislative strategy to establish school principal certification in Michigan law.

Appropriate standards for school principals already exist in Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards (ISSLC) adopted in 1996 by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), a nationwide nonprofit organization. At least 34 states have used these standards to license or certify school principals. Some states (including Texas) use these standards for induction purposes and others for evaluation. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) published its own set of standards for principals at the elementary and middle school levels in 2002 with the publication of *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do*. Certification based on such a specific set of standards would guarantee students and their families that the instructional leader of their school is qualified to direct the effort to improve student achievement.

Improving student achievement is the primary responsibility of all school building principals. To help meet this responsibility, principals need skills

in instructional leadership, professional development, and facilitating teacher improvement. Principals also need an understanding of curriculum frameworks and assessment and their relationship to instruction. The demands to meet state and national goals inherent in *No Child Left Behind* and *Education YES!*, the need for leadership skills to support teachers as they work to improve student achievement, and the rapid growth in information and technology challenging educators and students today all support the need to restore school principal certification in Michigan. Providing the opportunity for certification will not deter or discourage the prospective principal. It will foster the skills and confidence needed in those individuals challenged to lead instruction in Michigan's public schools. The State Board of Education Task Force on Elevating Educational Leadership has done an excellent job of reviewing the current status of principal certification in Michigan and has made strong initial recommendations. The time has come for Michigan to provide principals with the opportunity to meet specific standards for school leadership. I call on the State Board of Education, the Michigan Legislature, and Governor Granholm to work with the Task Force to re-establish a certification process for school principals.

For more information, contact: Joanne Welihan, Executive Director, Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (MEMSPA), 1980 N. College Rd., Mason, MI 48854, (800) 227-0824, fax (517) 694-8945 or e-mail joanne@memspa.org.

Helene J. Lusa, Ed.D., is a representative of the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (MEMSPA) who advocated in favor of principal certification at the Michigan State Board of Education meeting on August 28, 2003.

▶ **For more information on quality administrators, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.**

Getting to Know Your State Board of Education

Leading Educational Change in Michigan

Even before it achieved statehood, Michigan was a leader in public education. In 1809, judicial districts created schools and levied taxes to support them. Twenty years later, The Territorial Council divided the districts into school districts and gave the state the right to supervise schools. Michigan's first Constitution created a Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1835. John D. Pierce, a frontier missionary, was Michigan's first superintendent and the first independent administrator of education appointed under a state Constitution in the United States. The State Board of Education's current responsibilities were established by the 1963 State Constitution. The leadership legacy continues as Board members lead the way in improving public education through recommendations and actions that result in key legislative changes.

John C. Austin, Treasurer, Co-Chair, Ensuring Excellent Educators Task Force Democrat-Ann Arbor, Term Expires 1/1/2009



Mr. Austin was elected in 2000. He is a senior partner with Public Policy Associates, a research and consulting firm based in Lansing. Mr. Austin holds a Master of Arts in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science from Swarthmore College. E-mail John C. Austin at jca@publicpolicy.com.

Elizabeth W. Bauer, Chair, Embracing The Information Age Task Force Democrat-Birmingham, Term Expires 1/1/2011



Mrs. Bauer was elected in 2002. She is a self-employed, international consultant in human rights and civil society and a former executive director of the Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in religions from Mount Holyoke College and a Master of Arts in education for exceptional children from Ohio State University. She has done graduate studies in speech pathology at University of Minnesota and doctoral studies in education administration at Michigan State University. E-Mail Elizabeth W. Bauer at ebauer7400@aol.com.

Carolyn L. Curtin, Secretary, Chair, Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy Task Force Republican-Evart, Term Expires 1/1/2011



Mrs. Curtin was elected in 2002. She is a homemaker and

volunteer. She is a former member of the Evart School Board and the Mecosta-Osceola County Intermediate School Board. She attended Ferris State University. E-mail Carolyn L. Curtin at jccurtin40@hotmail.com.

Marianne Yared McGuire NASBE Delegate Chair, Elevating Educational Leadership Task Force Democrat-Detroit, Term Expires 1/1/2005



Mrs. McGuire was elected to the State Board of Education in 1996. Her background in education began as a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher in Grand Rapids and Detroit public schools. She currently serves as the National Association of School Boards of Education (NASBE) Delegate. She has worked as a newspaper editor and as a congressional staffer. Mrs. McGuire holds a Bachelor of Arts in education and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in communications from Wayne State University. E-mail Marianne Yared McGuire at mcguiremar@earthlink.net.

Herbert S. Moyer Vice President, Chair, Integrating Communities and Schools Task Force Democrat-Temperance, Term Expires 1/1/2005



Dr. Moyer was elected to the State Board of Education in 1996. He has served in numerous roles in Michigan's public school system. He has served as a teacher, school administrator, and superintendent of Bedford Schools. Dr. Moyer holds a Bachelor of Arts from Western Michigan University, a Master of Arts from Columbia University, and an Ed.D from Wayne State University. E-mail Herbert S. Moyer at lpmandhsm@juno.com.

Kathleen N. Straus President, Democrat-Detroit, Term Expires 1/1/2009



Mrs. Straus, first elected to the State Board of Education in 1992, was re-elected in 2000. She has served as staff director of the Senate Education Committee and director of governmental relations for the Michigan Association of School Boards. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Hunter College. E-mail Kathleen Straus at strauskn@aol.com.

Reginald M. Turner Democrat-Detroit, Term Expires 1/1/07



Mr. Turner was elected in September 2003. He is a member of Clark Hill, P.L.C., where he specializes in government relations and management-side labor law. For the past year, he served as president of the State Bar of Michigan. Mr. Turner holds a law degree from the University of Michigan Law School and also a Bachelor of Science degree from Wayne State University. E-mail Reginald M. Turner at tumermm@michigan.gov.

Eileen Lappin Weiser Co-Chair, Ensuring Excellent Educators Task Force Republican-Ann Arbor, Term Expires 1/1/2007



Mrs. Weiser was elected to the State Board of Education in 1998. She is executive director of the McKinley Foundation of Ann Arbor. She graduated from the University of Michigan and Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music and a Master of Fine Arts in music in piano performance. She has served on the Executive Committee of the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs for eight years. E-mail Eileen Lappin Weiser at eweiser@weisernet.com.

For more information, contact: State Board of Education, Michigan Department of Education, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 373-9434 or visit John A. Hannah Building, 608 West Allegan St., Lansing, MI 48933.

▶ **To read more about how schools work, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.**

Building Leadership Capacity

What Kind of Leader Are You?

Principals build leadership capacity in different ways, most often using one of four approaches. Some styles are preferable to others:



- Directive: engages in command-and-control behavior.
- Laissez-faire: makes the decision behind the scenes without involving others systematically, creating organizational uncertainty and fragmentation.
- Collaborative: encourages open participation, but is unsure how to involve those who don't choose to be involved. May unwittingly prolong dependency behaviors and dispositions inherited from previous years.
- Capacity-building: creates meaning and shared knowledge through broad-based, skillful participation.

Source: Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement

▶ **Read more about these four approaches in *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement* by Linda Lambert, published by the Association from Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) available for purchase at www.ascd.org, \$18.95 ASCD members, \$23.95 non-members.**

New MDE Resource Helps Schools Take the Mystery Out of School Report Cards

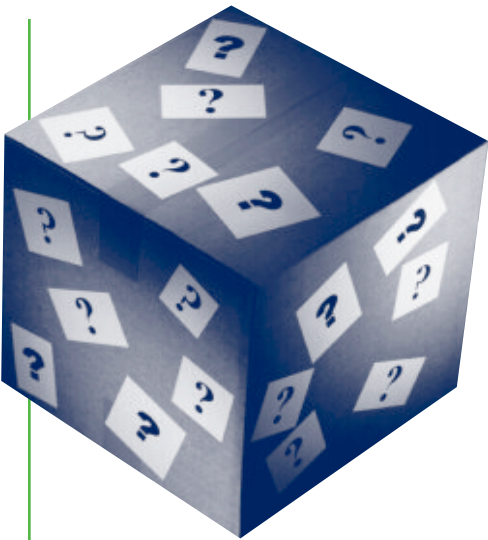
Michigan Department of Education's Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit



The Michigan Department of Education's *Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit* is designed to assist school district personnel understand and communicate the complex federal and state requirements contained in the *No Child Left Behind Act* and Michigan's Accreditation System known as *Education YES!*. The guide and tool kit will help schools share information and build understanding with a wide variety of audiences, including parents, business partners, and community members.

This document offers information about the following topics:

- What Is Education YES?
- *No Child Left Behind*
- Annual Report Card Requirements
- Using the Online School Report Card
- Using the Report Card for School Improvement
- Questions to Anticipate



The guide and tool kit also provides sample activities and strategies for sharing information about building school report card results.

For more information or to download this document, visit www.michigan.gov/mde or contact: Sheri Carter, Michigan Department of Education P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 241-0494, fax (517) 335-4565, cartersh@michigan.gov

► To read more about school reports cards, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

What Is AYP?

Frequently Asked Questions About Adequate Yearly Progress

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is one of the cornerstones of the federal *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act*. In Michigan, AYP is a measure of year-to-year student achievement on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test.

To comply with NCLB, Michigan and other states must have developed target starting goals for AYP and the state must “raise the bar” in gradual increments until 100 percent of the students in the state are proficient on state assessments by the 2013-14 school year.

NCLB also requires other indicators to be used in determining AYP. For elementary and middle schools in Michigan, attendance rates are used. For high schools, graduation rates are used. All schools must have at least 95 percent of its students take the MEAP.

AYP applies to each school building in the state; however, NCLB remedies for schools that do not make AYP for two or more years in a row apply only to those districts and schools that receive Title I federal funds. Because Michigan had an AYP definition in place before 2001-02, Title I schools—those that qualify because of an increased proportion of students that receive free and reduced lunch—that did not make AYP prior to that year may be identified for corrective action as defined in NCLB.

Source: Michigan Department of Education's *Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit*

For a more detailed explanation of AYP, visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on Michigan Department of Education's *Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit*. The Michigan School Report Card Web site allows users to review performance data for schools and verify the accuracy of the data. Visit <http://meis.mde.state.mi.us/ayp>.

See the AYP Glossary on page 11.

► For additional resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Learn More about NCLB Assessment and Accountability Requirements

The Michigan Department of Education's Assessment and Accountability Web site is a central source of information about the major areas that impact student performance and school accountability. Visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on school assessment and accountability to access the following informational links:

- *No Child Left Behind*
- Adequate Yearly Progress
- Annual Report on NCLB Report Card
- *Education YES!*
- MEAP and Standardized Tests
- State Assessment for Students with Disabilities

www.michigan.gov/mde

Making Sense of NCLB and Education YES!

No Child Left Behind Overview

No Child Left Behind (NCLB), signed into federal law by President Bush in 2002, is having a tremendous impact on Michigan's public schools and schools across the country. The legislation represents the largest ever involvement in K-12 education by the federal government.

NCLB was designed around the idea that not all students are making the academic progress they need to make in order to become successful adults. The new law includes three key requirements: closing the achievement gap for low-income students, minority students, and students with disabilities; holding schools accountable for all students performing at a high level; and having a “highly qualified” teacher in every classroom.

NCLB strives for each student to be proficient in reading and mathematics, as defined by each state, by the 2013-14 school year. States will set incremental percentage goals based on 2001-02 data and identify what it will take to get to 100 percent proficiency by 2013-14. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) made toward the 2013-14 goal will be measured in terms of student subgroups for a school, district, or state. The same target goals will apply to all subgroups in all schools across the state. Those subgroups are: 1) the school as a whole; 2) white; 3) African American; 4) Native American; 5) Asian/Pacific Islander; 6) Hispanic; 7) multi-racial; 8) limited English proficient; 9) students with disabilities; and 10) economically disadvantaged students. If even one student subgroup in one subject does not make its targeted goal, then the entire building is considered as not making AYP.

NCLB and Michigan's Education YES!

In addition to measuring schools according to standards set under *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, the State Board of Education remains committed to *Education YES! A Yardstick for Excellent Schools*, begun in 2001 in Michigan.

Both *Education YES!* and NCLB require reading and mathematics assessments for students in grades 3-8. NCLB requires that students in high school be tested at least once in reading and mathematics, so Michigan will continue its testing of high school students in all four subject areas (reading, mathematics, science, and writing) at grade 11.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) will be required of every state on a biennial basis beginning in 2002-03. Michigan continues to participate in all NAEP sampling requests and uses the tests as an indicator of student achievement.

Both *Education YES!* and *No Child Left Behind* hold high standards for academic achievement as their cornerstone, but they measure progress toward reaching that goal differently.

In Michigan, *Education YES!* takes into account more than a single test on a single day. It is only fair to use multiple measures to rate the quality of Michigan's neighborhood public schools.

Source: Michigan Department of Education's *Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit*

For a more detailed explanation of NCLB and Education YES!, visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on Michigan Department of Education's *Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit*

► For additional NCLB and Education YES! resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

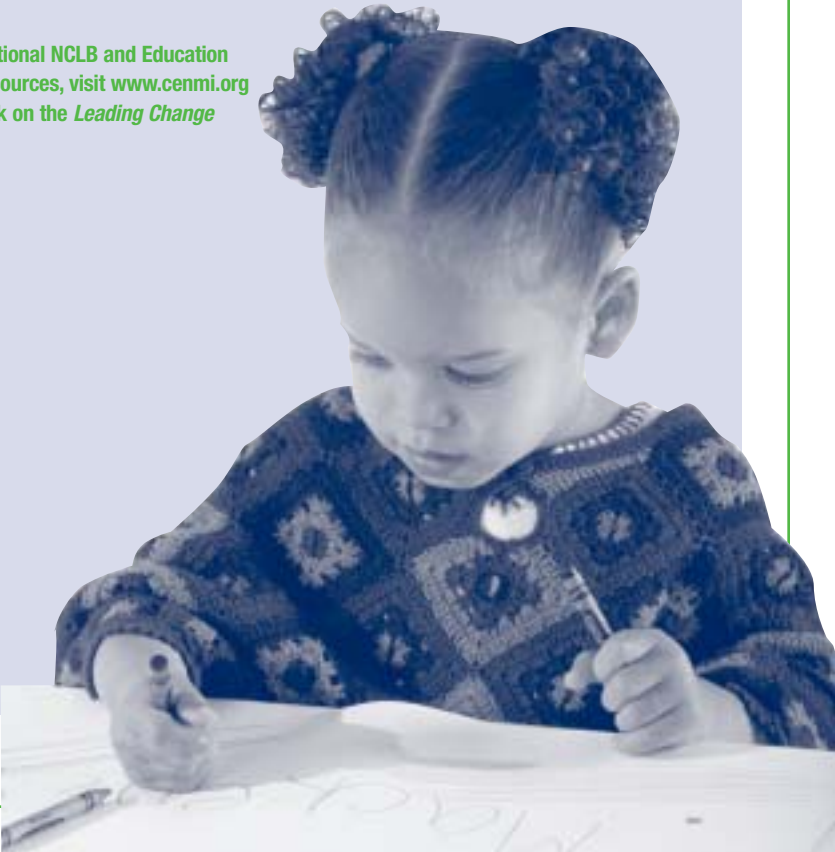
Tips for Communicating Education YES! Report Card Results

The following are a few key points to use when sharing the contents of your district's annual school report cards:

- Determine your key messages
- Inform ALL employees first
- Keep parents informed
- Schedule editorial board visits with local media before and after report cards are released
- Ensure that your message is easy to understand
- Build credibility—tell the good and the bad
- Be sure to explain the big picture—the big goal
- Focus on growth

Source: Michigan Department of Education *Education Yes! Report Guide and Tool Kit*

For a more detailed explanation of these tips and for more information about the strategies for reporting Michigan Department of Education Report Card results, visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on Michigan Department of Education *Education YES! Report Card Guide and Tool Kit*.



Leadership Is Essential for Schoolwide Behavior and Learning Initiative

Behavior and Learning Support Initiative Gets Underway

by Steven D. Goodman, Ph.D., Teacher Consultant, Ottawa Area Intermediate School District, and Co-Director, Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative



A new state initiative sponsored by the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services focuses on increasing student reading performance, reducing problem behaviors, and helping school staff use student performance information to develop and evaluate behavior and reading interventions. In Spring 2003, Macomb Intermediate School District (ISD), Ottawa Area ISD, and Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency (ESA) were awarded this grant for schoolwide behavior and learning programs. Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi, pronounced as mi-blis-ē) is a Mandated Activities Project under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA).

School leaders want to know how their leadership is guiding the school climate. The MiBLSi project will help school administrators lead their districts toward building the capacity to sustain effective schoolwide behavior and learning programs. The project will provide information, coaching, resources, and incentives for focused planning and intervention. Schools will be trained and supported in this data-driven, problem-solving model at the individual, grade, and schoolwide levels. The first group of participants in the project will be selected and in place by February 2004. Additional participating schools will be added to the project each year over a four-year period.

Schools are complex systems that benefit from direction, valid information, proven practices, and appropriate resources to be effective. Building support for new initiatives takes time. That is why the MiBLSi project will strongly encourage participating schools to make a three-year commitment to the project.

Past efforts at implementing schoolwide behavior and reading models indicate that principals play a key role in successful schoolwide initiatives. In the MiBLSi project, the building principal will develop building-based teams for schoolwide behavior and reading support. With support from the district's central office and guidance from the school principal, the building team will develop an action plan, implement schoolwide strategies, and evaluate schoolwide efforts. The principal will provide focus to staff and students through feedback and acknowledgement of project accomplishments. The principal also will communicate the importance of the project and allocate the resources necessary to carry out the action plan.

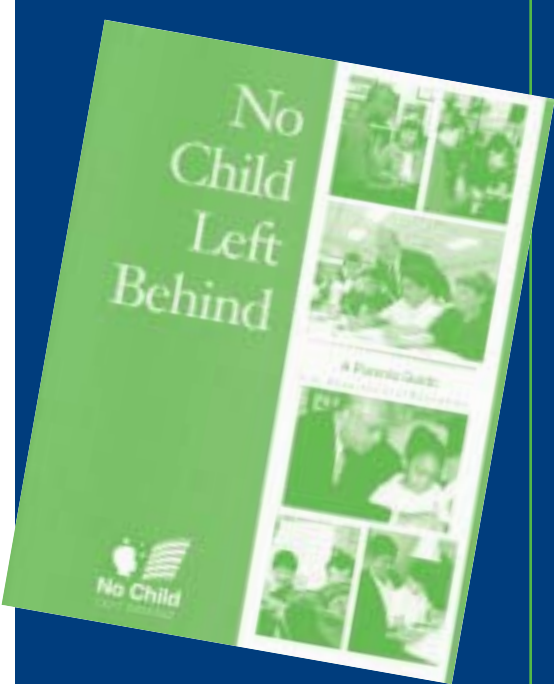
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Scott, T. M., & Hunter, J. (2001). *Initiating schoolwide support systems: An administrator's guide to the process*. *Beyond Behavior*, 11, 13-15.

For more information, contact: Steve Goodman, Ph.D., Ottawa Area ISD, 13565 Port Sheldon Rd., Holland, MI 49424, (877) 702-8600 #4027, fax (616) 738-8946, sgoodman@oaisd.org; Kathryn Schallmo, Macomb Intermediate School District, 44001 Garfield Rd., Clinton Township, MI 48038-1100, (586) 228-3330, fax (586) 263-6240, kschallmo@misd.net; or Margaret McGlinchey, Ph.D., Kalamazoo RESA, 1819 E. Milham Rd., Kalamazoo, MI 49002-3035, (269) 385-1581, fax (269) 381-3523, mmcglinc@kresanet.org.

► To read more about **Positive Behavior Support**, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the **Leading Change** icon.



Keeping Parents and Teachers Informed!

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Parents' Guide

Now available for parents looking to better understand *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) is a guide that summarizes the main provisions of the law, answers common questions, and provides information on additional resources.

No Child Left Behind: A Parents' Guide explains the benefits for parents of this historic legislation to improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools. Signed into law on January 8, 2002, the *NCLB Act of 2001* builds on four principles for education reform: accountability for results, doing what works based on scientific research, expanded parent options, and expanded local control and flexibility.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Teachers' Guide

The NCLB Act recognizes that teachers are on the front lines of this historic effort, and it creates a system that provides unprecedented support and assistance to help teachers be successful in their jobs.

The NCLB teacher toolkit is designed to provide teachers with information about how the NCLB Act supports teachers. It includes an overview of the law's "highly qualified" teacher provisions, as well as useful information about other aspects of the law.

For a copy of these guides, visit www.cenmi.org and click on Products or call (877) 4ED-PUBS. Additional information for community, parent, or faith-based groups about *No Child Left Behind* is available by contacting the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs, Educational Partnerships and Family Involvement Unit. E-mail partner@ed.gov or call (202) 401-0056.

Source: *The No Child Left Behind Achiever*, www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov

► To read more about **No Child Left Behind**, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the **Leading Change** icon.

A Principal Answers Questions about Using the Behavior and Learning Support Initiative Strategies

Editor's Note: Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) comes on the heels of a 2001, four-year, federally funded grant project awarded to investigate the association between behavior and reading difficulties on a schoolwide level. (See "Schools Address Correlation between Behavior and Reading Difficulties," Newsline, September/October 2001, pg. 14.) Jean Sharp retired as principal of Lake Hills Elementary (third grade through fifth grade) and Ferrysburg Elementary (kindergarten through second grade) in Spring Lake, Michigan last spring. She responded to questions about her involvement with the federal initiative, which aligns with the proposed MiBLSi model and strategies. The federal project will continue for the next year and a half.

Q: Why is it in the interest of your staff to adopt MiBLSi strategies?

A: The idea of combining behavioral and learning support made sense to the staffs of Lake Hills and Ferrysburg. We believe that we are most successful as educators when we look at the whole child. By monitoring the child's reading and behavioral data on a regular basis, we can intervene to change behavioral expectations and the instructional delivery methods for behavior and reading.

Q: How is your staff responding to the MiBLSi approach?

A: The staffs at Lake Hills and Ferrysburg voted 100 percent to support the MiBLSi model. As the model has evolved in our schools, the staffs have been committed to viewing data and changing the way they have been teaching students. They teach behavior expectations and are open to trying reading interventions to effect change in student progress.

Q: What do you do to engage parents in the MiBLSi model?

A: Parents are part of the decision-making process when they serve on the Schoolwide Management System Inspiring Learning Excellence (SMILE) team. Parents also work as playground supervisors to help monitor and intervene for those who need behavioral modifications on the playground, where behavior referrals tend to be the highest.

Q: How are parents in your school responding to the MiBLSi model?

A: Parents are informed how we make decisions for reading and behavior based on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) testing and number of office referrals data. At school orientation, parents see a Power Point presentation of our MiBLSi model plans. MiBLSi model plans are updated monthly in our newsletter. The students talk about and follow the rules: "Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe." Parents hear this common language and follow through with the rules at home.

Q: How is the MiBLSi approach affecting referrals to the office, suspensions, time-on-task in the classroom, attendance?

A: It has been interesting to see almost a bell-shaped curve in our reporting. In the beginning, staffs reported only the most serious offenses but then began to report all things that were deemed inappropriate. The number of referrals increased even though they were not as serious. Now the number of referrals, for both major and minor offenses, is declining.

Q: How has the adoption of the MiBLSi approach changed your school environment?

A: Adopting the approach has changed our school environment in several ways:

- We have higher expectations for reading and behavior.
- We have a focused, consistent reading plan.
- We have a consistent plan for evaluating reading three times per year.
- We have a consistent schoolwide plan for behavior.
- Students feel safer.
- We have parents working with us for school improvement.

Q: Would you like to share any other comments or information?

A: The MiBLSi model has given our schools a common framework for reading and behavior. The MiBLSi model has become our school improvement focus, and I think it has given us a vision as to where we need to go to improve school learning and create a safer and more caring school environment.

For more information, contact: Jean Sharp, (616) 846-1926 or Susan Mueller, Lake Hills/Ferrysburg Principal, 18181 Dogwood, Spring Lake, MI 49456, (616) 850-5400, muellers@ghaps.org.

Follow the Leader!

Principals from Michigan's Diverse Schools Share Thoughts about Leadership

by Linda K. Wacyk, Communication Specialist



Tara Fry
Fairview Elementary School
■ *Lansing Public School District*
■ *Serving 222 students (K-5)*
■ *Urban setting*
■ *Nearly 6 years in this position*

What is your personal leadership motto?
Many belief systems guide me, but one motto that keeps surfacing is the “Fish! Philosophy,” from the book, *Fish! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results* by Lundin, Paul, and Christensen. Our school uses these four principles of the Fish! Philosophy to stay energized and engaged:
■ *Play.* Find ways to make even the most serious tasks fun and playful.
■ *Choose your attitude.* We DO have control over our attitudes, and positive attitudes are contagious!
■ *Be there.* In a school, people are the priority, and they deserve a leader who is “there” not just visibly, but also mentally.
■ *Make their day.* Make people feel involved and special about what they contribute.

Why did you choose to become a principal?
The idea of becoming a principal slowly crept into my head. As a teacher, I took on more and more building-wide responsibilities until I gained a well-rounded understanding of the work that principals do. However, I can honestly say that I hadn’t totally convinced myself that I wanted to be a principal until I was asked to be an “acting principal” in my district. That experience is what gave me the *confidence* that I truly could do the job!

If you could sign up for any course, what would it be?
One of the most growing experiences of my career was the Michigan Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPPF), a national program of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). I would love to continue this model of learning through a course that:
■ Networks professionals from diverse backgrounds (not just educators) and allows them to creatively forge close, interdependent, and long-lasting relationships among themselves.
■ Exposes me to the inside track on current educational issues of public policy and inspires me to effect change on a larger scale.
■ Builds my skills as a facilitator and team builder.
■ Prompts me to more deeply explore and hone my leadership skills and style.

What are the essential traits of a principal?
Although I am a principal, I still have to know how to be a teacher! A principal should be a capable instructional leader—know the curriculum well, be familiar with assessments, and use data to inform effective instruction. Beyond that, principals should be energetic; organized; efficient; resourceful; diplomatic problem solvers; and patient, attentive listeners. A principal also should be extremely level-headed and able to prioritize and juggle many tasks at once!

What factors lead to your success as a principal?
I listen to internal cues, especially when making critical decisions. I have learned that my “gut feeling” or sense of intuition is right about 99.9 percent of the time. I draw on the strengths and talents of others and let them lead on things they do well. I pride myself on having a friendly and inviting attitude. I am reliable, pay attention to details, and always follow through.

How do you help your staff meet the needs of diverse learners?
In our urban district, we have students receiving special education services, students with exceptional abilities, students at risk for failure, and students with ethnic and linguistic differences. To address this diversity, we study data to look for achievement gaps and incorporate strategies into our school improvement plan that address the needs of all learners. We take a team approach with our special education students so that we always are monitoring individual progress and adjusting our efforts to best meet each student’s needs. Our Student Support Team (SST), which includes a teacher consultant, school social worker, and school psychologist, holds bi-weekly meetings to collaborate and devise plans to better meet the needs of diverse learners.

What are your thoughts about the Board of Education Task Force’s recommendations to require certification for principals?
I believe that a “new system of endorsement” for school administrators is a very sound recommendation, and I believe that it will be most effective if implemented with many of the other actions mentioned in the report. We *should* be highly qualified for our work in education, and a foundation is certainly built by demonstrating competencies in educational and instructional leadership.

For more information, contact Tara Fry at Fairview Elementary School, 815 N. Fairview Ave., Lansing, MI 48912-3129, (517) 325-6784, tfry@lsd.k12.mi.us.



Jerry Sinkel
Principal of the Year, Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (MEMSPA)
Mackinaw Trail Middle School
■ *Cadillac Area Public Schools*
■ *Serving 570 students (6-7)*

■ *Rural setting*
■ *2 years in this position, 23 years as a principal*
What is your personal leadership motto?
Be a servant to all. If you have a servant’s heart, no job is too big or too small.
If you could sign up for any course, what would it be?
Developing professional learning communities. I’m trying to move our building into that area. Also marketing our schools to the public.

What are the essential traits of a principal?
Passion for what they’re doing. If you’re lackadaisical about what you’re doing, that will rub off on students and staff. They respond to and respect a principal’s positive demeanor. What you model is much more powerful than what you say.



What factors lead to your success as a principal?
My colleagues, parents, and staff have rallied around me and helped me succeed. They say they appreciate my integrity, follow-through, passion, and high energy. Also, my Board of Education supports innovation.

How do you help your staff meet the needs of diverse learners?
I give teachers opportunities to stretch and be innovative. I encourage risk-taking and allow them time to explore together strategies that work. Also, we create diverse environments for different learning styles. We have categorical rooms, resource rooms, and inclusion. (Sinkel learned about the value of providing choices from his daughter who is deaf and hated being pulled out of the classroom.)

Do you have any words of wisdom?
Don’t go into this profession unless you *love* working with children. There is a real time commitment—more than just an eight- or nine-hour day, but be sure to create balance in your life. I take time every day for family. And I play with kids in my school. If we don’t have fun with the kids, we forget why we went into this job in the first place.

What are your thoughts about the Board of Education Task Force’s recommendations to require certification for principals?
I have mixed feelings. Many good educators and leaders are passed over just because—for whatever reason—they can’t pass a certification test. However, recruiting leaders from business and industry is risky. These areas are totally different from education. In education, you have no real control over your “raw materials.” You take everyone who walks through the door and teach and help them.

For more information, contact: Jerry Sinkel, Mackinaw Trail Middle School, 8401 S. Mackinaw Trail, Cadillac, MI 49601, (231) 876-5600, Jerry.Sinkel@cadillac.k12.mi.us.

▶ **To read more about the challenges faced by rural schools and educators, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the Leading Change icon.**

Use Technology to Stay in the Know

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is now sending notices to principals via listserv. This listserv replaces snail mail and group faxes as the MDE finds new ways to help principals stay informed about education news and updates. To subscribe, e-mail Jean Shane at shanej@michigan.gov.



Ryan A. Donlan
Bay-Arenac Community High School
■ *A Bay-Arenac ISD-chartered alternative program*

■ *Serving 125 at-risk high school students in Bay and Arenac counties, including homeless teens, teen parents, and those who commute from jail*
■ *Beginning his 4th year in this position*

What is your personal leadership motto?
“It’s not about us; it’s about the students whose lives depend on us.”

“*[At our school] The main thing is the main thing: student achievement.*”

Ryan Donlan

Why did you choose to become a principal?
A great teacher made a difference for me. I had a dream that an entire school could be run with the warmth, fun, discipline, and enthusiasm of my classroom—a school that *truly* would make a difference for those whose lives had thrown them curveballs. I’m there today, with much work to do and much farther to go on behalf of kids.

If you could sign up for any course, what would it be?
“Saving Every Child, a Guaranteed Approach to Making a Difference in Every Situation.” I just need to find a university that offers it.



We asked these principals to name the one best publication or resource that has helped them do their job? Here’s what they said:

“Right now, *Educational Leadership* and anything on developing professional communities.”
Jerry Sinkel

“I often rely on publications from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) <http://www.ascd.org/> to keep me informed about my field. I always read the monthly editions of *Educational Leadership*, and I order numerous books each year that are published by ASCD.”
Tara Fry

My favorite professional publications are: *Principal*, published by NAESP; *Educational Leadership*, published by ASCD; and *Education Week*. Additionally, my mentor has played a tremendous part in helping me to develop and refine my leadership skills.
Denise Powell

“In terms of publications in the broad sense of the term, my favorite would be, *Empowering Discipline, an Approach That Works with At-Risk Students*, by Vickie Phillips. Of course, one can’t go wrong with *Educational Leadership*.”
Ryan Donlan



Effective Leaders Bring Us Out of Conflict into “Fellowship”

by Deborah Canja, CEO, Bridges4Kids

In the world of education, stories of conflict between schools and parents are all too common, particularly when a child is struggling. The finger-pointing starts, defenses go up, battle lines are drawn, and through it all, the student suffers. This especially is true in the world of special education where stories of unreasonable parents and insensitive administrators make us all long for a better way to resolve problems.

Recently, a large and diverse group of parents, teachers, administrators, and community members identified a better way. As part of Michigan's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP), the group met to analyze the sources of conflict in Michigan's special education system and how problems could be better resolved. Special education provides due process hearings—a process almost everyone involved dreads—to resolve problems. The hearings often come too late to help and can make relationships and attitudes worse. The group concluded that conflict resolution cannot wait for due process or the filing of complaints. It needs to begin when a parent first approaches a teacher with a concern or a teacher approaches a parent with a concern. The group also recognized that most parents and educators interpret expressed concerns as personal criticism, which can lead to anger and distrust.

The answer, the group concluded, is to recognize that when a student struggles, conflict is inevitable. Rather than shy away from conflict, we should seek to manage it well, with positive policies, procedures, and strategies in place for helping parents and schools communicate better. The goal should be to foster a spirit of fellowship at every opportunity. Helping a building or district embrace the kind of change that may be needed is the role of leadership.

John P. Kotter, retired Professor of Leadership at the Harvard Business School, has said, “Large scale change, when it happens well, has much more to do with leadership than it does with management.” In their book *The Heart of Change**, Kotter and co-author Dan Cohen argue that “nontrivial” change forces people to change their behavior by changing how they feel rather than how they think. It is the job of the leader to communicate a vision that motivates the desire to feel differently and, therefore, act differently.

Effective principals who communicate the vision of a “spirit of fellowship” to staff and parents alike will help bring about the change envisioned by the CIMP workgroup. Michigan's Special Education Mediation Project is helping leaders foster the change. Volunteer mediators trained in special education are available at every step along the way to keep the lines of communication open. Best of all, mediation is free. Call 1-800-8RESOLV...and feel the change.

**The Heart of Change, Harvard Business School Press, 2002, \$24.95*

Deb Canja is the CEO for Bridges4Kids, a nonprofit, statewide, parent organization dedicated to helping ALL children succeed. Visit www.bridges4kids.org.

What are the essential traits of a principal?

I think there are several:

- Compassion for the “human condition.”
- Charisma, with an infectious hope and belief that anything is possible.
- Sense of humor and approachability.
- Guts and strength to operate on vision, mission, and principle, *not politics*.
- Outstanding communication skills—reading, writing, speaking, listening, and observing.
- A solid knowledge of effective instruction and leadership theory.

How do you help your staff meet the needs of diverse learners?

First, we provide a balance of interventionists and academic teachers on staff during all hours of the school day. Second, we meet weekly to design individualized academic and intervention plans for all needy students. I provide professional development for teachers so they can bring researched, effective practices to our school, and I share strategies on multiple intelligences and learning styles. Finally, I treat my staff as “surgeons” who should be respected as such when working with student learners. Interventionists keep these “academic surgeons” free from distraction.

Do you have any words of wisdom?

As my wife and I are expecting our first child, these words by Dr. Tim Quinn from the Michigan Leadership Institute are becoming clearer all the time. *Every troubled kid who comes to us was once someone's newborn baby. Every parent who visits our school still has unconditional love for that child, no matter how difficult the situation.* We must at all times, keep this in mind when dealing with our most challenged, difficult, resistant, and at-risk youth. We must respect them as valuable human beings—ones with hopes, dreams, feelings, insecurities, and aspirations.

What are your thoughts about the Board of Education Task Force's recommendations to require certification for principals?

Standards are never a bad thing. Plus, they encourage staff to seek credentials as well. BUT, there is a shortage of principals. We want to keep an open door for good candidates. I would hope that principals

who come into the job through non-traditional channels would seek credentials within a grace period. I wasn't credentialed when I began this job, but I agreed to get what I needed within a reasonable period of time.

For more information, contact: Ryan Donlan, Bay-Arenac Community High School, 1608 Hudson St., Essexville, MI 48732, (989) 893-8811, admin@bachs.us.



Denise Nicole Powell
Isaac Crary Elementary School

- Serving 544 students (PreK-5) in an urban setting with 66 percent eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
- 6.5 years in this position

What is your personal leadership motto?

A framed quote in my office clearly and constantly reminds me of my purpose here at Crary School. The quote is from Gandhi: “We have to be the change we wish to see in the world.” If I want to see change in the world, I have to be a participant in the change process by positively impacting the lives of those with whom I come in contact.

Why did you choose to become a principal?

I didn't really “choose” to become a principal. I chose to become a special education teacher when I was in the sixth grade because of the very powerful love I have for children and young adults. When the opportunity for promotion presented itself, I reluctantly accepted. Although I would miss teaching, I felt as principal I could possibly have a greater impact on a larger number of children.

If you could sign up for any course, what would it be?

The course would be entitled: “How to Write and Illustrate Children's Literature.”

What are the essential traits of a principal?

A principal must be passionate about children; committed to education; dedicated to the job and its responsibilities; and determined to provide children a safe, clean, and loving school environment.

Principals must also have an understanding of the cognitive and affective stages of child development and how those stages impact children's behavior and academic performance.

What factors lead to your success as a principal?

My spirituality, love for children, positive attitude, determination, and sense of humor are all factors that have contributed to my success.

How do you help your staff meet the needs of diverse learners?

We meet the needs of diverse learners by providing an environment that allows all children to feel successful through various school-sponsored events, clubs, and activities. Crary School has a broadcast club school store (run by students), honors club, “student of the month” recognition, and other activities.

What are your thoughts about the Board of Education Task Force's recommendations to require certification for principals?

Certification for principals is an excellent requirement. Mentoring relationships between “seasoned” and aspiring or new principals would also be a “win-win” effort.

For more information, contact: Denise Powell, Crary Elementary School, 16164 Ashbury Park, Detroit, MI 48235, (313) 852-0612, denise_powell@dpsnet.detroit.k12.mi.us.

“We don't have time to wait. Every year new data come in, and that's another year in the life of a child. I hope you are impatient people.”

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

What Do You Think?

Elementary and Middle School Principals Respond

“When asked, principals will tell you that they took the job to help kids and to improve instruction, but that they find themselves burdened with increasing and often conflicting responsibilities. Among the conflict-generating elements cited most often are special education, school improvement, annual reports, accountability, core curriculum, student safety, gender and equity issues, mission statements, goals and outcomes, staff development, building level decision making, curriculum alignment, student achievement, Michigan Educational Assessment Program assessments, other assessments, and accreditation.”

Elevating Educational Leadership Task Force Report, August 8, 2002.

Editor's Note: Members of the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association (MEMPSA) responded to the following question, posted on the MEMPSA listserv, in collaboration with Leading Change and Joanne Welihan, Executive Director, MEMPSA. The Michigan Department of Education offers assistance on these and other topics challenging school leaders. Visit www.michigan.gov/mde or look for additional web linked resources at www.cenmi.org.

As a school leader, what is the biggest challenge you are facing this year and what are you going to do to address the challenge?

“As a relatively new principal, I feel overwhelmed by some of the special education issues that we are faced with in public education. I want to meet everyone's needs, and it seems quite overwhelming some days when some students require so much of my time and energy. I plan on continuing to educate myself on these special education issues and network with other administrators to see how they are handling difficult needs. I will continue to plan for time to spend with ALL students rather than allowing a few to dominate my time.”

Melissa Schaedig
Alpena Public Schools
Schaedigm@alpenaschools.com

“As a principal in an urban school district, I face many challenges. The biggest is getting students to school every day and on time. Staff complains that the main reason that students are not achieving is because of attendance. Some of the incentives that the school is considering are:

- Scuba lessons for grades 6-8.
- Concert tickets for grades 6-8.
- An all-grade luncheon.
- AAA offered three bikes per grade level that students will have an opportunity to win with tickets for having completed a full week of school.
- A volunteer telephone bank for calling students home each morning.

We are interested in any additional suggestions.”

Ora Beard
Detroit Public Schools
Orabeard@detroitk12.org

“I am a special education director with Lenawee Intermediate School District and we've just reviewed and updated our strategic plan (our 3rd time since the late 1980s). One of my challenges is to address and balance the tactical issues and the strategic issues. I often refer to this challenge as fire containment and fire prevention happening at the same time. One example where a need for this balance occurs is with our high number of students with learning disabilities. We have to ask how we can impact current curriculum changes and literacy development with the general education population, while addressing the current needs of students identified with learning disabilities, while providing appropriate assessments and services. This balancing act flows across all the initiatives.”

Vicki Carpenter
Vcarpent@scnc.lisd.k12.mi.us

continued on page 10



IDEA UPDATE

Access Updates about IDEA

The IDEAPractices Web site is designed to answer all your questions about the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The site, sponsored by IDEA Partnerships, also features updates about IDEA law and regulations; professional development resources; and best practices to help ALL children learn, progress, and realize their dreams. Subscribe to IDEAnews and receive monthly e-newsletters with IDEA-related news briefs, notices of upcoming conferences and events, new product and resource announcements, and new highlights on the IDEAPractices Web site.

The IDEA Partnerships bring together four national projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to deliver a common message about the landmark 1997 reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA):

- **Associations of Service Providers Implementing IDEA Reforms in Education (ASPIIRE)**, representing service providers
- **IDEA Local Implementation by Local Administrators Partnership (ILIAD)**, representing administrators
- **Families and Advocates Partnerships for Education (FAPE)**, representing families and advocates
- **Policymaker Partnership (PMP)**, representing policymakers

The IDEA Partnerships, working together since the landmark 1997 reauthorization of IDEA, inform professionals, families, and the public about IDEA and strategies to improve educational results for children and youth with disabilities.

Visit www.ideapractices.org to read about **Principals in Special Education and their Critical Role as Leaders**. To find out about the latest news on the current IDEA reauthorization, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Principals Play a Critical Role in Promoting Early Childhood Literacy



Ellen Snedeker

Maybury Elementary School is one of Detroit Public Schools' "turn-around schools" working with Michigan's Reading First team to improve early literacy achievement. The school serves approximately 657 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. Five hundred and thirty five of Maybury's students receive free or reduced-price lunches.

Maybury's principal, Ellen Snedeker, works with literacy coach Ernestina Iglesias to improve early childhood literacy. Leading Change asked the literacy coach about the principal's role in promoting literacy at Maybury Elementary. Here's what she had to say.

What is the principal's role in promoting early literacy?

At Maybury Elementary, the principal supports the literacy growth of all students by promoting fundamental partnerships among teachers, parents, students, and the community. The principal is approachable and welcoming, provides a role model of excellence, and is one of the primary forces who communicates with all stakeholders to form the ties that bind everyone together around one central goal—student achievement.

How does the principal support teachers?

Teachers at Maybury know that the principal expects continuous growth and improvement in instruction. The principal supports this growth in a number of ways:

- Provides opportunities for teachers to strengthen their practices by providing them time to collaborate weekly. Together, teachers look at student work and teacher practices.
- Models good instructional practices at teacher meetings.
- Identifies areas of strength and weakness, then supports and scaffolds teacher growth.
- Assists teachers in analyzing data to target areas of need.
- Provides staff development opportunities for all.

The principal regularly visits teachers in their classrooms and debriefs them formally and informally regarding their practices. At Maybury, teachers are monitored and supervised and understand that accountability is expected.

How does the principal involve parents in meaningful ways?

Our principal tries to make parents aware of their role in their children's literacy. Monthly parent meetings provide parents with key knowledge regarding literacy. Programs such as Lightspan™ bring the curriculum to the home, and parents are given the opportunity to support that curriculum.



We constantly invite parents to participate and volunteer in the classroom. Monthly letters from teachers let parents know what is being taught. The principal encourages and supports staff to use "teachable moments" with parents whenever possible to help them foster literacy in the home.

Meetings with migrant families provide information about the importance of limiting school-year vacations. Maybury provides kits for students who must leave so they can practice skills while they are traveling with their working families.

How does the principal work with students to improve literacy?

Our students know that everyone is accountable—even the principal—to grow, behave well, be responsible, and do his/her best. Students understand that excellence is the goal. The principal and all staff members are there to support students.

The principal makes sure that teachers at the early grades are skilled at using multiple assessment tools to identify problems early. If early efforts in the classroom are unsuccessful, the teachers refer students to the school's resource coordinating team. The principal works with parents and teachers to create an intervention plan, and then we revisit the plan regularly to ensure that it is addressing the student's needs. Maybury uses programs such as Lightspan™, Accelerated Reading®, and Reading Is Fundamental that support literacy schoolwide to

provide students with sound, research-based practices aimed at increasing early childhood literacy.

What role do principals play with community partners?

Our principal networks with community representatives to allocate manpower, money, and resources for the students and parents. Community partners such as Empowerment Zone, Communities in Schools, Reading Is Fundamental, Reading First, UAW, Adcraft Read Aloud, Wayne State University School of Education, and Western High School ROTC provide services or resources to support literacy at all grade levels.

What's the key to improving early literacy?

At Maybury, the principal strives to create a relationship-based atmosphere centered on supporting excellence. This culture filters down to teachers, students, parents, and even community partners. Each year, that message becomes stronger and the focus more centered.

For more information, contact Ellen Snedeker at Maybury Elementary, 4410 Porter, Detroit, MI 48209, (313) 849-2014, ellen.snedeker@detroitk12.org.

► For additional literacy resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Did You Know...

Members of the State Board of Education Are Elected

Eight members of the State Board of Education are elected at-large on a statewide partisan ballot to serve eight-year terms. Two Board members are elected every two years. In addition to eight voting members, the Board has two ex-officio members—the Governor and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Vacancies on the Board are filled by gubernatorial appointment for the remainder of the term. The Board elects officers for two-year terms.

The State Board's Mandate

"Leadership and general supervision over all public education, including adult education and instructional programs in state institutions, except as to institutions of higher education granting baccalaureate degrees, is vested in a State Board of Education. It shall serve as the general planning and coordinating body for all public education, and shall advise the legislature as to the financial requirements in connection therewith..."

Excerpt from The Constitution, article VII, Section 3

Examples of Statutory Powers

- Appointing the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Approving accreditation standards for school districts.
- Setting criteria for grants awarded by the Department of Education.
- Approving teacher preparation standards.
- Approving K-12 curriculum standards.

► To read more about how schools work, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Avoid Special Education Complaints

by Ron Greiner, Coordinator, Policy, Planning, and Compliance, MDE, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

Every year, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS), and intermediate school districts (ISDs) investigate a number of formal complaints about the experiences, training, or conduct of school district and public school academy (PSA) employees who work with children with disabilities.

- Complaints of this kind may target:
- Administrators (general or special education).
 - Special education teachers.
 - Special education related service providers.
 - Special education paraprofessionals.

Schools can help to reduce the number of these types of complaints in several ways. **First**, districts should review their personnel procedures and make sure they:

- Carefully screen employee credentials and identify the roles that each employee can fulfill.
- Identify when employee credentials expire and/or must be renewed.
- Establish processes to inform district staff when their credentials must be updated, how to update them, and that they must maintain their credentials in order to stay employed.
- Annually review each staff member's credential status.
- Annually monitor each staff member's assignments.

Second, when an individualized education program (IEP) is completed, the district should verify that the assigned staff who will work with the student have the credentials, qualifications, and skills to implement the IEP.

Third, educators should consider that parents are concerned about the quality of the relationships between their children and the people who work with them. For that reason, districts will want to insure that they:

- Provide ample opportunities for parents to interact with and become acquainted with the adults in their children's lives.
- Work closely with parents to involve and update them about any unusual incidents.
- Open communication channels so parents can raise issues and concerns.
- Make sure both district personnel and parents understand how allegations are handled at the district, ISD, and state levels.
- Provide information about the procedures for filing complaints, the process by which complaints are investigated, and what actions parents can take when they are not satisfied with the outcomes of an investigation.

Many formal complaints can be avoided when lines of communication between parents and the school district are open and there is a constructive way to work through conflicts.



Ron Greiner is a coordinator for Policy, Planning, and Compliance in the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS). For more information, contact him at OSE/EIS, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909; (517) 335-0461; Fax (517) 373-7504; e-mail: GreinerR@michigan.gov.

Editor's Note: This article was excerpted from FOCUS on Results. (GATA 03-03). FOCUS on Results is a new series of guidance and technical assistance documents launched this year by the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS).

The new **FOCUS on Results** series will keep stakeholders up to date on: changes in rules and regulations; dispute resolution; individualized education programs (IEPs) and individualized family service plans (IFSPs); assessment, accommodations, and alternate assessment; data and focused monitoring; and other relevant topics. **FOCUS on Results is scheduled to appear at least three times a year.**

The first three documents, addressing dispute resolution, were mailed to special education stakeholders in July 2003. You can find them, along with additional resources, at the MDE Web site, www.michigan.gov/mde or the Center for Educational Networking (CEN) Web site, www.cenmi.org. If you don't have access to the Web, call CEN at (800) 593-9146 ext. 20 and ask for copies of FOCUS on Results, Dispute Resolution.

The Importance of Quality Leadership

continued from page 1

for the whole building. A strong principal usually indicates a strong school. The equation is simple—principal + training in leadership skills + community support = principals capable of piloting their staff and students to success.

William (Bill) Cecil, a 16-year teaching veteran most recently taught fifth grade at Waverly Intermediate School, Waverly Public Schools, Lansing, Michigan. Bill was chosen for his upbeat and imaginative teaching style. Bill is currently taking a sabbatical year with the Michigan Department of Education after receiving Michigan's 2003-04 award for top teacher of the year.

For more information, contact: William R. Cecil, State Board of Education, Michigan Department of Education, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 241-1160, billcecil@bestyearever.net, or visit him at the John A. Hannah Building, 608 West Allegan St., Lansing, MI 48933.

▶ To read more about past Michigan teachers of the year and to find out how to nominate teachers for this position, visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on Recognition Programs in the Featured Services box on the lower left-hand side.

Parents as Partners

Principals Play Vital Roles on IEP Teams

By Judy Winter, Contributing Writer

The leadership style of the building principal plays a vital role in the individualized education program team (IEPT) meeting and successful implementation of the IEP. As a parent who has spent the past decade attending IEPT meetings, I've learned that one key characteristic of effective leadership is respect for what the IEPT meeting means and for each member of the team. When my son's princi-



pal treated the IEP process with respect, our team achieved new educational heights. Because of such strong leadership, my child's opportunities for success increased significantly. Here are some respect-based decisions I've seen that lead to a successful IEPT meeting:

- The principal scheduled enough time to discuss all necessary IEP issues and worked hard to keep the focus of the meeting on the needs of the student.
- The principal made the necessary arrangements for classroom substitutes so that staff could remain for a lengthy IEPT meeting. If the principal was unable to stay for the entire meeting, s/he made prior arrangements for a qualified professional to lead in her/his absence.
- When plans were made for the student to be present at the IEPT meeting, the principal made arrangements to meet the student and family prior to the initial meeting.
- The principal allowed time at the beginning of the meeting for introductions, including a brief explanation of each person's role on the educational team.
- Early in the meeting, the principal encouraged the team to highlight the student's individual strengths, interests, and educational success before addressing current challenges and brainstorming solutions.
- As the meeting opened, the principal stressed the importance of open, honest, and respectful communication among members of the educational team.
- The principal promoted partnerships between staff and family and modeled respect for the important roles of all those present on the educational team.
- The principal kept the language of the meeting focused on solutions for student success, not on a child's label, disability, or placement.
- The principal suggested breaks whenever the IEPT meetings ran long.
- The principal modeled effective leadership decisions designed to help ALL students succeed.

Judy Winter is an award-winning journalist and recipient of the Michigan Federated Chapters of the Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC) 2002 Exceptional Parent Award. E-mail her at jappwinter@aol.com or visit www.judywinter.com.

▶ To read more about planning a successful IEPT meeting, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Parents as Partners



Principals and Parents Have Children in Common

Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE) Promotes Children First

by Sue Pratt, Project Manager, Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE)

Parents and principals, principals and parents. Both stand for primary protector of children. Both stand for primary promoters of learning. Both stand for principal providers of information and support for the teaching staff.

How do principals and parents work together to promote educational success and collaborative efforts to ensure that all children learn and all staff is supported in their efforts?

- We begin by respecting each other's perspective. We realize that these perspectives are our own personal realities and, at times, our perspectives may differ.
- We put forth every effort to listen more than we speak. We listen not only to each other's words, but to body language as well.
- We problem solve, staying focused on the needs of the child.
- We understand that human frailties sometimes get in the way of our working together. We take a time-out and ask for others to join our team.
- We sometimes proclaim, "We're sorry," "We don't understand," "We need your help," or even, "We think we can help!"
- We participate, sometimes by just stopping by or calling to see how it's going.
- We pump up others by remembering to say, "Thank you," "You're doing a good job," and "We appreciate your efforts."
- We pay attention and watch our students grow and become successful, happy adults, who will make a difference in the world in which they live.

Working together offers promises for a future filled with perseverance that promotes opportunities for ALL children. Behind so many words are the dreams and efforts of so many people—children, parents, principals, and support staff—the primary promoters of learning.

For more information, contact: Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education (CAUSE) at (800) 221-9105 or visit www.causeonline.org. To view the CAUSE workshop calendar, visit www.causeonline.org/workshopcal.html.

Editor's Note: Citizens Alliance To Uphold Special Education (CAUSE) is the federally funded Parent Training Information Center for the State of Michigan. CAUSE is a statewide non-profit coalition providing free information, referral, support, advocacy, and workshops to parents and professionals working with children with disabilities and special needs.

Data Can Make a Difference



Effective Leaders Benefit from Data-to-Results Program

by Jennifer Rogers, Assistant Director of Public Relations/Communications, Michigan Association of School Boards

Today's schools face many challenges as they strive to raise achievement levels for ALL students. This demanding emphasis on higher quality forces board members and education leaders to take a look at their role in their school's improvement process. It's no secret that raising student achievement requires a good, hard look at data.

Data Helps Districts Set Goals

The Michigan Association of School Boards' (MASB) Data-to-Results program is designed to help busy board members and education leaders manage and interpret data productively. This practical and innovative program helps district personnel incorporate data into the strategic planning process and produce district-wide plans for their school districts. The program includes collecting qualitative data in interviews with staff, parents, community leaders, and students. By compiling data into an easy-to-understand format, the Data-to-Results program gives school districts an overall picture of their district so that board members and education leaders clearly can see where improvement is needed as well as respective areas of school excellence.

Data-to-Results takes information already collected in the district (e.g. assessment scores, district demographics, enrollment) and combines it with data from Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services (SES). Community input is considered a crucial component in the Data-to-Results data collection process. Easy-to-understand data summaries are provided by MASB for district demographics, student learning, operations and finances, personnel, enrollment, and facilities to help education leaders determine appropriate priority goals on which to focus. Prioritizing makes a positive difference in board and leadership productivity. The Data-to-Results program goal is to help school districts deal with declining enrollment, connect with their communities, focus on priorities, and work as a team, all while raising student achievement.

"Often each board member has three or four goals for the superintendent, so that can mean 28 goals," said Lloyd Kirby, Colon Community Schools Superintendent and Data-to-Results client. His district used the Data-to-Results program to identify four goals common for all board members. "This

sort of focus means we can really accomplish something for students," said Kirby. "Data-to-Results has increased the leadership commitment of the board and superintendent, and that has improved relations between the school board, superintendent, and leadership team," said Board President of Colon Community Schools Martha Graham. "We have a motivated school board and more credibility in the community."

Data Helps Districts Get Results

Cadillac Area Public Schools was committed to improving student achievement and raising its graduation rates. The district used Data-to-Results to find realistic ways to impact both areas. Cadillac Area Public Schools faced a huge problem with low graduation rates. The board of education thought it was a problem that every school district was facing and one the district needed to accept and move on. However, after using Data-to-Results, the district found that it had one of the lowest graduation rates in the state and that other schools weren't facing the same challenge. The board hired a success coordinator to act as a social worker/counselor to show students that Cadillac Area Public Schools cared and wanted them to finish school. The end result of their efforts was almost perfect graduation rates.

"Using Data-to-Results has made a real difference for Cadillac. It gave us a clear focus, direction, and hope for our goals," said Board President Craig Weidner.

While the specific Data-to-Results story is different for each district, there are common results: a district-wide focus on a limited number of measurable goals, objectives emphasizing student achievement, and improved relationships. The success of the program is reflected in the success that a district has in realizing its priority goals.

Jennifer Rogers is the Assistant Director of Public Relations and Communications for Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB). MASB advocates for public education and student achievement.

For more information, contact: Michigan Association of School Boards, (517) 327-5900, (800) 968-4627, info@masb.org or visit www.masb.org.

► **To read more about data systems for school improvement, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the Leading Change icon.**

Elementary and Middle School Principals Respond

continued from page 7

"I think our biggest challenge will be making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as it applies to *Education YES!* Through our North Central Accreditation (NCA) and school improvement committees, we will work as a team to assess areas of needed growth and develop action plans to address these areas. Professional development and parental support also will be necessary to ensure a steady increase in student achievement. With budget cuts, we will need to be creative with regard to professional development sources and funding. We plan on requiring a curriculum map from every teacher as well as benchmark checklists that teachers use to check off/date when benchmarks are taught. Our goal is to make sure that all the benchmarks are being covered at every level... As the year unfolds, we will refine our plans, always keeping our eye on the target.

Susanne Price
Lake Orion Community Schools
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► **For additional resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the Leading Change icon.**

Building a Bridge to Future Student Success

OSE/EIS Leads Michigan's Secondary Transition Initiative into the Future

by Beth Steenwyk, Deputy Director of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, Michigan Department of Education

The 2003-04 school year is well underway; teachers and students are actively engaged in learning throughout Michigan. On Tuesday, October 7, 2003, a group of 150 individuals who are committed to serving students with disabilities as they transition from school to adult life met to engage in their own learning. This group included representatives from intermediate school districts (ISDs), local school districts, the state schools, and partner departments: Corrections, Rehabilitation Services, Community Health, Family Independence, and Career and Technical Preparation. The day was the first time this school year that transition coordinators from across the state met. In many ways, it was a watershed day, a day during which the coordinators honored the work of the past and began to build a bridge to the future.

On September 30th, the Transition Services Project (TSP) ended its five-year grant cycle with the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (MDE, OSE/EIS). The TSP was directed by Jan Yoak-Newman. This pioneering concept provided Michigan a valuable service to ensure that parents, students with disabilities, teachers, and administrators had the necessary knowledge to provide quality transition services across the 57 intermediate school districts and constituent local districts.

As the grant came to a close, the OSE/EIS had to decide how to move forward with secondary transition services for students with disabilities in Michigan. After a great deal of thought and planning, the OSE/EIS determined it was necessary to develop a year-long process of data collection and review. This process will begin to create a picture of secondary transition services and needs across Michigan.

A data collection plan was developed with assistance from staff at the Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC). The GLARRC is a federally funded support system for states in the great lakes region as they serve students with disabilities. The plan for the 2003-04 school year includes three phases of work. The three phases include: Groundwork/Input Phase, Data Collection, and Learning from Data Portraits. All data gathered will be compiled, analyzed, and used in the next round of planning. This work will ultimately yield an aggregate picture of how well we are doing across the state relative to transition requirements.

The Transition Outcomes Project (TOP), designed by Dr. Ed O'Leary of the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, and implemented in over 25 states, has been effective in gathering this type of data. Dr. O'Leary has been working with Michigan over the past several years through the TSP and through some ISDs. This year, Michigan will expand and adjust its use of the TOP model to

collect a statistically reliable sample from all ISDs that volunteer for this effort during the 2003-04 school year. Then, the MDE, OSE/EIS will work with these districts to systematically enhance their services and student outcomes over the next few years.

The TOP project uses a data-driven model that:

- Identifies and evaluates current practices in meeting transition requirements.
- Includes baseline data from student individualized education programs (IEPs) as the context for setting goals, developing strategies, and implementing a local school district plan for improvement.
- Promotes an IEP process that is driven by student-desired post-school goals.
- Emphasizes improving transition services, showing results, and increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes for students.
- Empowers local schools to make changes in systems, processes, forms, programs, and approaches.

Conceptual Framework, O'Leary 1999

The MDE, OSE/EIS's initial plan is to collect and review transition related IEP data. Following the October 7th meeting, 42 of Michigan's 57 ISDs expressed interest in participating in the yearlong project, and many have already made plans to collaborate on data collection. On December 4-5, 2003, a comprehensive training is scheduled to prepare local and ISD transition coordinators to use the software-enhanced TOP process. Three additional coordinator meetings are scheduled for this school year to prepare for and conduct regional report-out meetings and to prepare for the 2004-2005 school year.

The OSE/EIS intends to provide leadership and support to all transition coordinators across the state as this project moves forward. The OSE/EIS leadership will include guidance, technical assistance, and financial support for meetings and the data collection work back in the districts. The OSE/EIS will support the evaluation of data and stakeholder input to ensure that the collection process is inclusive and considerate of the multiplicity of perspectives held by transition service practitioners. The OSE/EIS, in collaboration with the Michigan Transition Services Association (MTSA), another essential stakeholder group in this project, will offer networking opportunities to learn from and exchange ideas among personnel with secondary transition responsibilities across the state.

It is with considerable anticipation and excitement that Michigan's TOP moves forward with collective energy, knowledge, and passion. The efforts to improve transition services and outcomes for our students and communities in Michigan are a powerful force within our state.

For more information, contact: Beth Steenwyk, Deputy Director of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, Michigan Department of Education, OSE/EIS, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 241-4521, fax (517) 373-7504, steenwykb@michigan.gov

► **For more information about Secondary Transition issues, visit the Michigan Transition Resources Web site at www.cenmi.org/tspmi.**

What Does It Mean?

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) — The measure used to hold schools and districts responsible for student achievement in English language arts and mathematics. AYP is based on results from state assessment including Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and MI-Access, Michigan’s alternate assessment for students with disabilities, participation rates in state assessment, and attendance or graduation rates.

Annual State Objective — The level of achievement on the MEAP English language arts and mathematics tests needed by each school to make AYP based on achievement. The annual state objective will increase until it reaches 100 percent of all students in 2014.

Attendance Rate — The percentage of total school days that students in a school or district are present in school.

AYP Advisory — An alert that is given to a new school if state assessment scores fall below the annual state objective during the first year that the school operates.

Core Academic Subjects — The subjects that all students are expected to learn in preparation for adult life. In Michigan, these subjects include English language arts (reading and writing), mathematics, science, and social studies (history, geography, economics and American government). The federal *No Child Left Behind Act* also defines the arts as part of the core curriculum.

Education YES! — The state accountability system the Michigan Department of Education uses to determine how well a school is performing based on state assessment results and other school characteristics. Each school is graded on its student achievement and improvement, as well as 11 other performance indicators.

Graduation Rate — The graduation rate is generally thought of as the percentage of first-time freshmen who began school in a fall term who graduated from the same institution at the end of the spring term four years later. For purposes of calculating graduation rates, a “school year” will be considered as from the start of a school’s academic year through August 31. This allows the graduation rate to include seniors who graduate during the summer. For students with disabilities, the number of years for graduation may be defined in the student’s Individual Educational Plan.

Highly Qualified Teacher — A highly qualified teacher holds at least a bachelor’s degree and full state certification, has a major in the content/subject assigned to teach, or if teaching in a minor content/subject, has passed a rigorous state test in the content/subject, has completed 30 semester credit hours, holds National Board Certification, or meets a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation (HOU SSE).

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) — The statewide assessment program used in Michigan to test and report student achievement in the core academic subjects at certain grade levels. According to the Michigan Department of Education, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997* requires that all students with disabilities be assessed at the state level. In response to this legislation, the Michigan State Board of Education approved the Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS). The MEAP is one component of this assessment system. Content for the MEAP is linked to the Michigan Model Content Standards of the Michigan Curriculum Framework (1996).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 — A federal law that is the most recent authorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*. This act allocates funding and contains the requirements

for federal education programs. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education’s publication *No Child Left Behind: A Desktop Reference (2002)*, the act embodies four main principles:

- 1. Stronger accountability for results;
- 2. Greater flexibility for states, school districts, and schools in the use of federal funds;
- 3. More choices for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds; and
- 4. An emphasis on reading, especially for young children, enhancing the quality of the nation’s teachers, and ensuring that all children in America’s schools learn English.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* is designed to help all students meet high academic standards. The Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services’ publication *The Assist* (June 2003) explains that this act requires states to implement a single accountability system as well as increase the number of times students must be assessed.

Students with Disabilities — Students who are determined by an individualized education program team or hearing officer to have one or more specified impairments that necessitates special education or related services.

Students from Low-Income Families — Students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch based on the income of their family.

Students with Limited English Proficiency — Students whose primary language is not English and who have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English.

Supplemental Educational Services — Instruction provided to students outside of the regular school day by a state-approved provider selected by the parents of each eligible student.

Title I — The federal education program that provides funds to help schools and districts improve student achievement through additional instruction for students, professional development for school staff, and activities to help parents support their children’s education. Title I Part A provides assistance to improve the teaching and learning of children in high-poverty schools to enable these children to meet challenging state academic content and performance standards. Title I is intended to supplement, not replace, state and district funds.

Title I Committee of Practitioners — An advisory group required by the Title I law that assists the Michigan Department of Education in its Title I responsibilities.

Adapted from the Michigan Department of Education Web site and the Center for Educational Networking Web site.

For more information about Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), visit:
<http://meis.mde.state.mi.us/ayp/login.asp>.

▶ **For a more comprehensive glossary of education related terms, visit www.cenmi.org and click the glossary link.**

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■ ***Beyond Islands of Excellence: What Districts Can Do to Improve Instruction and Achievement in All Schools—A Leadership Brief*** presents the key findings and recommendations set forth by the members of the Learning First Alliance. For copies of the leadership brief (Stock No. 303369) or for the full report (Stock No. 303368), contact the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) at (800)933-ASCD, #2 or ASCD, P.O. Box 79760, Baltimore, MD 21279-0760 or visit the ASCD Web site at www.ascd.org. The cost is \$3 per copy for the leadership brief or \$10 per copy for the full report (plus shipping and handling). March 2003, Learning First Alliance.

■ **“Beyond the Pipeline: Getting the Principals We Need, Where They Are Needed Most,”** is a synthesis of findings from three research reports. A recent policy forum held by The Wallace Foundation and the American Youth Policy Forum in Washington D.C. says the difficulty some schools face in attracting a quality principal is not due to a shortage of certified candidates. Copies of the Wallace Foundation Policy Brief can be downloaded at www.wallacefunds.org. Print copies can be ordered for free at that Web site or by writing to: The Wallace Foundation, Two Park Avenue—23rd Floor, New York, NY 10016.

■ ***Trying to Stay Ahead of the Game: Superintendents and Principals Talk about School Leadership*** is a report from Public Agenda by Steve Farkas, Jean Johnson, Ann Duffett, and Tony Foleno, with Patrick Foley. Public Agenda was founded in 1975 and works to help the nation’s leaders better understand the public’s point of view and to help average citizens better understand critical policy issues. Public Agenda also conducted a series of one-on-one and group interviews with practicing superintendents and principals, including those in urban, suburban, and rural districts, and those from different parts of the country. Complete print copies are available for \$10 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling by calling (212) 686-6610 or by visiting www.publicagenda.org.

■ ***The Attributes and Career Paths of Principals: Implications for Improving Policy*** by Frank C. Papa Jr., Hamilton, Lankford, and James Wyckoff. Mining 20 years of New York state data, the researchers at the State University of New York at Albany discover, among other trends, that districts are hiring older candidates as first-time principals. Read more online at www.teacherpolicyresearch.org.



■ ***A Matter of Definition: Is There Truly a Shortage of School Principals?*** is a new center report that finds that despite widespread publicity about a shortage of school principals, there are far more candidates certified to be principals than there are principal vacancies to fill. The report, by Marguerite Roza, is on the Web site of the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington in Seattle. Visit www.crpe.org/pubs.shtml#leadership.

■ ***Collaboration Between General and Special Education: Making it Work*** by Michael N. Sharpe and Maureen E. Hawes discusses questions about participation of students with disabilities in accountability systems and how to develop new skills and strategies to meet these challenges. The issue brief *Examining Current Challenges in Secondary Education and Transition*, published by the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, is available online at www.ncset.org.

■ ***Who Is Leading Our Schools? An Overview of School Administrators and Their Careers*** by Susan M. Gates, Jeanne S. Ringel, and Lucrecia Santibanez. There is concern that now, as state and federal governments are increasing school accountability requirements and relying on school administrators to promote improvement, schools and districts will not be able to attract and retain enough qualified people to fill such positions. This report develops a conceptual structure for understanding the careers of schools administrators and describes what is known about those who hold such positions and how their characteristics have changed over time. Download the full report (or order for \$28) at www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1679/index.html.

■ ***The Assist*** newsletter is a publication related to the assessment of students with disabilities. *The Assist* may be downloaded from the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services section of the MDE Web site: www.michigan.gov/mde.

■ **IDEA Local Implementation by Local Administrators (ILIAD) Partnership at the Council for Exceptional Children** is an organization that supports principals in their role as the instructional leader in the implementation of IDEA. The partnership is between the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Through this partnership, principals receive professional development materials specifically designed to assist them as the instructional leader in providing special education services in their school. In addition, both organizations have cadres of principal leaders identified by their organization to provide direct support to their colleagues on IDEA. For more information about the ILIAD Partnership and featured resources, contact: (877) 232-4332 (toll free), (866) 915-5000 (TTY toll free) or visit www.ideapractices.org.

▶ **For additional resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon followed by the related resources link.**

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world: indeed it’s the only thing that ever has!”

Margaret Meade

Watch for the New Directory of Service Providers for Infants, Toddlers, and Students with Disabilities

The 2003-2004 Edition of the *Michigan Directory of Service Providers for Infants, Toddlers, and Students with Disabilities* will soon be available from the Center for Educational Networking (CEN). The directory contains information about administrative personnel who provide educational and other services related to two groups:

- Michigan's infants and toddlers ages birth to 3 with special needs (Michigan's *Early On*® population).
- Michigan's students ages 3 to 26 with disabilities.

The directory will also provide details about specific services that state and national community agencies, associations, and organizations provide to these individuals and their families.

CEN also provides other valuable publications such as ***FOCUS on Results***; a Web site for electronic resources, personnel development events, a glossary, publications, and other services; and other documents including:

- *Revised Administrative Rules for Special Education* (June 2002).
- *Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning* (February 2000).
- *Positive Behavior Support for Young Children* (June 2001).

The *Michigan Directory of Service Providers for Infants, Toddlers, and Students with Disabilities* will be available for download at www.cenmi.org (free of charge) or to order a copy, call CEN at (800) 593-9146 x 4 to request an order form or contact: CEN, Eaton Intermediate School District, 1790 E. Packard Hwy., Charlotte, MI 48813, info@cenmi.org.



Strong Committed Leadership Can Turn Schools Around



Michigan Leaders Mobilize to Ensure High Academic Standards for ALL Students

by Holly Spence Sasso, Managing Editor

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm made a commitment to partner in the Michigan Department of Education's effort to help low-performing schools make significant improvement in student achievement. The governor has called upon others to do the same and has created the Children's Action Network. The Network includes 20 government agencies as well as businesses, churches, and other community groups that impact children's lives. The State Board of Education's strategic goal for 2003-2004 is to "attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children, with primary emphasis on chronically under performing schools and students." Along with Governor Granholm and the State Board of Education, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), under the leadership of Superintendent of Public Instruction Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., and Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jeremy Hughes, is actively responding as a member of this Partnership for Success with a strategic High Priority Schools Initiative.

In 2003, Michigan identified 216 schools for continuous improvement and/or corrective

action based on Michigan's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards (see "What Is AYP" on page 4). From this identification, the MDE Office of School Excellence established the High Priority Schools Initiative. An initial effort of this initiative was an AYP Principal's Academy held in May 2003. The Principal's Academy invited principals from Michigan's high priority schools to collaborate about the principal's leadership role as the critical link leading schools and students to achieve high academic standards. "Having seen scores of successful 'turn-around' efforts in Michigan schools, we know there is no substitute for strong, committed leadership in the process," Governor Jennifer Granholm said in a welcoming statement to the academy audience.

The 200 principals attending the academy received intensive guidance in developing specific "turn-around" plans for their schools and in implementing the plans with their building-level staffs. The academy also helped principals prepare their staffs for new, intensive professional development. Themes of the academy included:

- Instructional leadership.
- Resources for school improvement.
- Using data for decision-making.
- Taking stock, setting goals, and implementing a process.

On July 28, 2003 members of the High Priority Schools Initiative met with partner educators and school improvement facilitators from 16 intermediate school districts and consultants from the MDE, Office of Field Services. The goal was to implement high priority teams in eight regional service delivery areas: Genesee, Kent, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Oakland, Saginaw, Washtenaw, and Wayne.

These teams meet with members of the staff from identified high priority schools to design and implement strategies for becoming a more successful school.

Another effort of the MDE's High Priority Schools Initiative is the development of a collection of essential tools for school reform. The tools will be field tested throughout the school year at high priority schools and are expected to be available in March 2004. Developed within specific instructional units, the tools are designed to help school leaders guide schools toward increased student achievement. Several units are currently in development:

- Powerful Leadership
- Administrative Systems That "Hum"
- Spirit/Climate You Can Build From
- Agreeing on Expectations
- Using Data Decisively
- Improving Instruction
- Getting the Power from Your Aligned Curriculum
- Practical Professional Development
- Focusing the School Improvement Plan
- Decision-Making Meetings That Work
- Putting Technology to Work

For more information about the High Priority Schools Initiative, contact: Yvonne Caamal Canul, Michigan Department of Education, Special Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent, Office of School Excellence, (517) 335-3401, CanulCy@michigan.gov.

For additional resources, visit www.cenmi.org and click on the *Leading Change* icon.

Education WOW!



Ed Roeber

The Michigan Department of Education has hired a nationally-recognized expert in student assessment testing to coordinate the transition of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) from the Michigan Department of Treasury to the Department of Education.

Dr. Edward D. Roeber, Ph.D., former vice president for the New Hampshire-based school assessment consulting firm Measured Progress, serves as the Senior Management Executive of MEAP. Roeber is a former supervisor of MEAP, having directed that program from 1976-1991. He then served as the director of student assessment programs for the Council of Chief State School Officers until 1998, where he assisted states in the development of their statewide

assessment programs. Roeber has helped design national assessment tools for special education students, workplace readiness, health education, as well as the core academic subjects of science and social studies.

For more information, contact: Ed Roeber, Michigan Department of Education, 608 W. Allegan St., P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 373-3324, roebere@michigan.gov.

“When you have a struggling school, you often have a struggling community”

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

If you need assistance making this publication accessible for a person with a visual impairment, please contact the Michigan School for the Blind at (800) 622-6730 #1420.

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Share your comments about this publication and ideas for articles. Contact Holly Spence Sasso, CEN managing editor, at (800) 593-9146 #6, hss@eaton.k12.mi.us. We look forward to hearing from you!



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